



# 202 foes push Broadway Curve

## S. Mtn. Freeway need questioned if I-10 is widened

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Freeway planners are moving ahead to expand the bottlenecked Broadway Curve on Interstate 10, a move some critics of the proposed South Mountain Freeway say could eliminate the need for the \$1.7 billion connector loop through Ahwatukee Foothills.

Some Ahwatukee residents say the curve expansion would alleviate I-10 traffic to and from the Foothills, and could prompt ADOT to drop its controversial plans for the South Mountain Freeway.

"The amount of money that would be spent on South Mountain Freeway could be spent expanding the Broadway Curve, I-17 going to Anthem and I-10 south to Tucson," said Jim Jochim, an Ahwatukee Foothills resident opposed to the Loop 202 freeway.

Meanwhile, Tempe leaders are pressuring the Arizona Department of Transportation to accelerate the Broadway Curve project because the bottleneck is causing pollution and traffic woes on city streets.

"I'm calling for them (ADOT) to honor their promise," Tempe Mayor Hugh Hallman said Thursday before a Tempe City Council meeting to discuss the matter.

"I appreciate that they want to plan for the people who want to live in Maricopa and Pinal County in 2030, but they are substantially undermining the quality of life for the people who are living in Tempe now."

ADOT has long planned to double the capacity of the 12-lane segment of I-10 near Tempe by adding a carpool lane in each direction and building a secondary thoroughfare of eight lanes along the 14-mile stretch from Baseline Road to Interstate 17.

The \$1.3 billion project has been reported in *The Arizona Republic* several times over the past few years since passage of Proposition 400 in 2004.

The voter-approved initiative adds a half-cent to sales taxes paid by consumers to fund light-rail construction and several freeway projects, including the Broadway Curve expansion.

Hallman is upset that ADOT has expanded the project's scope so much that it has delayed improvements by at least three years - perhaps until 2012.

"The problem we face is that when the U.S. 60 was expanded to its widest width through Tempe, we were

promised that ramps would be built and the Broadway Curve would be widened to handle more traffic," Hallman said Thursday.

But now, ADOT has delayed the project by expanding its scope to handle traffic projections from rapidly booming areas of Pinal County and the city of Maricopa, southwest of Interstate 10 and Ahwatukee Foothills.

"Now all of those things are hung on this Christmas tree," Hallman said. "And it's preventing all the residents of Tempe and the whole Southeast Valley from getting through the freeway.

"People are exiting the freeways at Rural Road and McClintock onto our arterial streets, so it has exacerbated the tie-ups and on traffic on McClintock and Rural."

Hallman, however, said he supports the South Mountain Freeway, which would complete the Loop 202 designed to ring the Valley.

ADOT has envisioned the proposed 22-mile freeway as a bypass to the current I-10 route, running along Pecos Road and looping west around and through the South Mountain Preserve to link to 55th Avenue. Hundreds of homes in the path would be razed under the controversial plan.

Work on the Broadway Curve initially was planned for 2009, but now that's the date ADOT would only complete its draft environmental impact statement.